

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):  
(a) The strategy and therefore the programmes for agricultural mechanization has been towards promotion of eco-friendly agricultural equipment, which can be optimally and efficiently utilized by the human beings, animals and can be operated by mechanical and electrical power to increase productivity of land and labour, improve utilization and efficiency of various agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and irrigation water and improve quality of farm operations. Such equipments should reduce the cost of production and drudgery associated with the various agricultural operations. The schemes for the promotion of agricultural mechanization in the country are as under:—

- (i) Promotion and Strengthening of Agricultural Mechanization through Training, Testing and Demonstration.
- (ii) Post Harvest Technology and Management.
- (iii) Revised Macro Management of Agriculture Scheme-Farm Mechanization.

(b) and (c) The requirements of training and testing of agricultural equipment are met through four Farm Machinery Training and Testing Institutes established at Budni (Madhya Pradesh), Hissar (Haryana), Garladinne (Andhra Pradesh) and Biswanath Chariali (Assam). To train large number of farmers at nearby places, outsourcing of training through State Agricultural Universities, Agricultural Engineering colleges, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, polytechnics, etc. is being implemented from the year 2004-05. Demonstration of Equipment at farmers' field is being undertaken from the year 1999-2000. The testing of agricultural equipments has also been decentralized and the State Governments may test the equipment if considered necessary through institutions such as the State Agriculture University, any Engineering College, Indian Council of Agricultural Research institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendra or any other research institute designated by the State Governments to undertake such activity.

#### **Development of horticulture**

3046. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge potential for the development of horticulture in the country;
- (b) if so, the steps taken and programmes initiated for tapping its full potential;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that the facilities for horticultural crops and export of horticultural produce are not adequate as a result of which huge volume of horticulture produce perishes every year; and
- (d) if so, the steps being taken to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS):  
(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India has been implementing two Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz., Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North-Eastern States including Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh (TMNE) and

National Horticulture Mission (NHM) for the remaining States for holistic development of horticulture to enhance production and productivity of horticultural crops viz., fruits, vegetables and spices. Under these schemes, assistance is being provided for area expansion, establishment of nurseries for raising quality planting material, rejuvenation of senile orchards, nutrient and water management, etc.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. On an average, post harvest losses range from 10 to 30 percent in horticultural crops. The Government has launched several schemes for providing facilities for horticultural crops and promotion of export of horticultural produce which are as follows:—

- (i) Under TMNE and NHM, assistance is provided for creating post-harvest infrastructure, including cold storage facilities as back-ended subsidy @33.33% of the project cost with a ceiling of Rs. 60.00 lakh per unit for hilly and tribal areas and @25% of the project cost not exceeding Rs. 50.00 lakh per unit for other States. During 2006-07, a new Component has been introduced under the National Horticulture Mission to facilitate setting up of Modern Terminal Markets in the country, which will have state-of-the-art cold chain and other infrastructure and will help in establishing an efficient supply chain right from the farm gate to the consumer/processor/exporter.
- (ii) The National Horticulture Board (NHB) is also implementing programmes aimed at reducing the losses of horticulture produce through the schemes 'Capital Investment subsidy for Construction/Expansion/Modernization of cold storage/storages for Horticulture Produce' having the same norms and 'Development of Commercial Horticulture through Production and Post-harvest Management' providing back ended subsidy @20% of the total project cost with a maximum limit of Rs. 30.00 lakhs for North-Eastern States/Hilly/Tribal Areas and Rs. 25.00 lakhs for other States.
- (iii) A Capital Investment Subsidy Scheme, titled 'Gramin Bhandran Yojana' for Construction/Renovation of Rural Godowns in the country through the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection aims at providing scientific storage near the production centers (excluding municipal corporation areas) in order to reduce the losses.
- (iv) A Central Sector Scheme, titled 'Development/Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization' facilitates development of marketing infrastructure, market user common facilities, infrastructure for direct marketing of agricultural commodities, infrastructure for supply of production inputs and need-based services infrastructure for e-trading, market intelligence etc. and mobile infrastructure for post harvest operations (excluding transport equipment) by providing credit-linked back-ended capital investment subsidy to entrepreneurs and direct assistance to State agencies.